

# RECLAMATION

*Managing Water in the West*

## Summary of Lake Berryessa Community Forum Meeting

**Date:** April 24, 2013

**Time:** 1:30 pm

**Location:** Elks Lodge #832 Napa CA

**Camp Berryessa Plans:** John Woodbury, Parks Manager for Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District (District) provided an overview of planned development at the Camp Berryessa site. Camp Berryessa is being developed as an outdoor environmental education camp under a 25 year agreement between the District and the Bureau of Reclamation. The District was able to raise \$1.55 million in grants and donations to fund the design and first phase of construction. Currently plans are under review by Reclamation. Construction could begin in late 2013 or early 2014, with a possible opening date late in 2014. At full build-out the facility would have capacity for 128 campers at a time. It is designed as an environmental education facility where various groups can come to conduct their own educational activities. When not in use by educational activities, the camp will be made available on a reservation basis. Members of the Community Forum Coordinating Team asked about public access to the site, how campers would access the water, the impact of high or low water on the operation of the camp, whether there will be fees to use the area, and how people can find out more about the progress.

**New concession area names:** Lake Berryessa Park Manager Jeff Laird discussed Reclamation's decision in re-naming five of the concession areas. A press release and map of the concession areas had been released on April 5, 2013, announcing the new names of the recreation areas. The new names are Putah Canyon Recreation Area (formerly Putah Creek Resort and Chaparral Cove), Monticello Shores Recreation Area (formerly Rancho Monticello Resort and Manzanita Canyon), Berryessa Point Recreation Area (formerly Lake Berryessa Marina Resort and Blue Oaks), Spanish Flat Recreation Area (formerly Spanish Flat Resort and Foothill Pines), and Steele Canyon Recreation Area (formerly Steele Park Resort and Lupine Shores). As well, Jeff Laird showed images of what the entrance signs would look like. A large sign will identify the facility name, in conjunction with smaller signs that indicate the concession contractor and the types of services available. The Bureau of Reclamation is working with The Lake Berryessa Chamber of Commerce and Napa County in the development of suitable directional road signs. Members of the Community Forum Coordinating Team asked about the materials the signs would be fabricated out of and the placement of the signs at the Concession Areas.

**Sequestration impacts:** Lake Berryessa Park Manager Jeff Laird described impacts of budget sequestration on Reclamation operations at Lake Berryessa. A Department of Interior hiring freeze slowed hiring of seasonal staff. Lake Berryessa's seasonal maintenance staff and park rangers have now been exempted from that hiring freeze, and will be brought on for the summer. However, the seasonal staff will be starting later than usual, extending the seasonal closure of the northern portion of Oak Shores Day Use Area. That area will either be used as a concession contractor-operated camping area or will be re-opened as a day use area on May 19. Additional sequestration impacts included the

cancellation of ranger-led hikes and kayak trips through May, and the cancellation of four educational programs, in order to ensure that staff are available to provide visitor assistance services.

**Current status of recreation services:** Reclamation is currently operating Putah Canyon Recreation Area and Steele Canyon Recreation areas to provide day use and boat launch services without fees. Spanish Flat Recreation Area, Oak Shores Day Use Area, and Smittle Creek Day Use Area are open as public day use areas without a fee from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm. Starting May 1, the closing time will be extended to 8:00 pm. Capell Cove Boat Launch, Eticuera Day Use Area and Olive Orchard Day Use Areas are open. The Dufer Point Visitor Center is open on Saturdays and Sundays from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Pleasure Cove Marina is open and operating with a variety of services, including boat launching, marina services, fuel, store, camping, and cabins. Markley Cove Marina is open and operating with a variety of services, including boat launching, marina services, fuel, store, and cabins.

Interim contracts for several areas are approaching completion. A contract with Pleasure Cove Marina to operate Steele Canyon Recreation Area and Spanish Flat Recreation Area is in final review. Once the contract is signed Reclamation will be able to announce a starting date for services in those areas. The contract would be for the 2013 recreation season, with two option years. Reclamation is still in search of a concession contractor for Putah Canyon Recreation Area and the northern portion of Oak Shores Day Use Area. If no concession contractor is found to operate these two areas, Reclamation will operate Putah Canyon Recreation Area as a boat launch and day use area for the summer, while continuing to look for a concession operator and would operate the northern half of Oaks Shores as a day use area. Reclamation has recruited volunteer park hosts to coordinate with park rangers in the operation of Oak Shores Day Use Area and Putah Canyon Recreation Area if necessary. Members of the Community Forum Coordinating Team asked about the timetable for the contracts with Pleasure Cove Marina and Markley Cove Marina, and about the status of the boat launch at Steele Canyon.

**Timeline plan and budget for concession services 2013-17:** Drew Lessard, Acting Area Manager at the Central California Area Office, discussed upcoming projects for the development of concession services. Reclamation intends to provide a proposal to the previous owner related to the entrance road and launch ramps within the next week. Terms and conditions have been agreed to in principle to issue a new interim contract for the operation of Markley Cove Marina. This interim contract is undergoing final review prior to signing. Regarding the long-term redevelopment timeline, the Alternative One (Advance Site Planning), shown at the last Lake Berryessa Community Forum Meeting has been selected. This planning method provides conceptual site planning and environmental review prior to the award of a contract. Performing advance site planning and appropriate environmental review on the plans would allow a concessionaire to begin on-the-ground development in a more timely manner than other methods. This process will include conceptual site planning, market assessment and an economic feasibility study. Members of the Community Forum Coordinating Team expressed concern about the possibility of the environmental compliance process tying up the development, and concern that Reclamation not repeat previous processes that resulted in unsatisfactory outcomes. Forum Coordinating Team Members expressed a need to receive timely notice of and updates on the environmental compliance process.

Park Manager Jeff Laird discussed the status of planned improvements in the Continuity of Recreation Services Plan. Reclamation staff e recently submitted purchase requisitions for award of contracts for several improvements. With current levels of funding, and assuming contracts are awarded as scheduled, we plan to do the following: Two double vault toilets will be purchased for installation at Putah Canyon Recreation Area, Spanish Flat Recreation Area and Steele Canyon Recreation Area by late spring of 2014. Wells are planned to be drilled and developed at Putah Canyon Recreation Area

and Monticello Shores Recreation area, along with limited potable water distribution infrastructure. Temporary RV dump stations will be installed at Putah Canyon Recreation Area, Spanish Flat Recreation Area and Steele Canyon Recreation Area. Spanish Flat Recreation Area and Steele Canyon Recreation Area will be connected to the existing water service providers. Erosion and bank failures at Spanish Flat Recreation Area will be repaired. Electrical services will be restored to the entrance stations at Putah Canyon Recreation Area, Spanish Flat Recreation Area and Steele Canyon Recreation Area. In addition, Reclamation will continue to plan and seek funding for the removal and bank stabilization of the seawall at Berryessa Point Recreation Area and for the installation of a temporary launch ramp at Spanish Flat Recreation Area.

**Environmental assessment for interim services:** Mark Szydlo, the Natural Resource Specialist at Lake Berryessa, provided an overview of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for interim services at Lake Berryessa. The Environmental Assessment was opened for public review on April 15, 2013 and remains open for comment through April 26, 2013. . The EA addresses proposed actions in interim services by describing the potential actions and analyzing their potential impacts. Additional analysis and permitting will still be required once site specific plans are developed. Members of the Community Forum Coordinating Team expressed concern that the environmental compliance process would delay development in concession areas, and had questions about the relationship of this EA to the Visitor Services Plan/Record of Decision (VSP/ROD). Reclamation identified that management of the lake will remain consistent with the guidance in the VSP/ROD.

**Trails management plan:** Jason Jordan, Outdoor Recreation Planner, provided a brief overview of the Trail Management Plan. Under contract to Reclamation, TetraTech conducted a study to identify potential trail segments, the potential users of those segments, and the priority order that those segments should be built in. In the past few months, Reclamation has undertaken a rehabilitation of the Smittle Creek Trail and several of the trails to the water near the dam. In addition, Tuleyome has been awarded a grant to proceed to work on the North End Trail.

**Future meetings/potential topics:** The general sentiment from the Lake Berryessa Community Forum Coordinating team was that the meetings should continue to remain monthly for the time being. Coordinating Team members also expressed a preference for meetings to be held more frequently in the lake area rather than rotating meeting locations in gateway communities. Potential Topics for future meetings that were raised included fire management, grazing and other management issues for the east side of the lake, the NEPA process, and more information on trails.

**Public Comment:** Public in attendance at the Lake Berryessa Community Forum raised the following concerns: possible disruption of visitor services at Markley Cove if a new contractor were selected for the long term, directional signage for boaters on the lake, fire concerns in the concession areas, the availability of the Steele Canyon Recreation Area boat ramp, management of the Skier's Cove area, and availability of annual passes to concession areas for those who live locally.

The date, time and location for the next meeting is still to be determined.

For questions or comments regarding Lake Berryessa, contact Park Manager Jeff Laird, either by e-mail (JLaird@usbr.gov), mail (Lake Berryessa Office, Park Manager, 5520 Knoxville RD., Napa CA 94558) or by phone (707-966-2111, ext 0).

**For additional information, please visit the Lake Berryessa website at <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/ccao/berryessa> and click on "Recreation Updates" in the light-blue navigation column on the left.**